HODAG FUN

ACTIVITY BOOK

PUZZLES • MAZES • AND MORE!

WELCOME TO HODAG FUN!

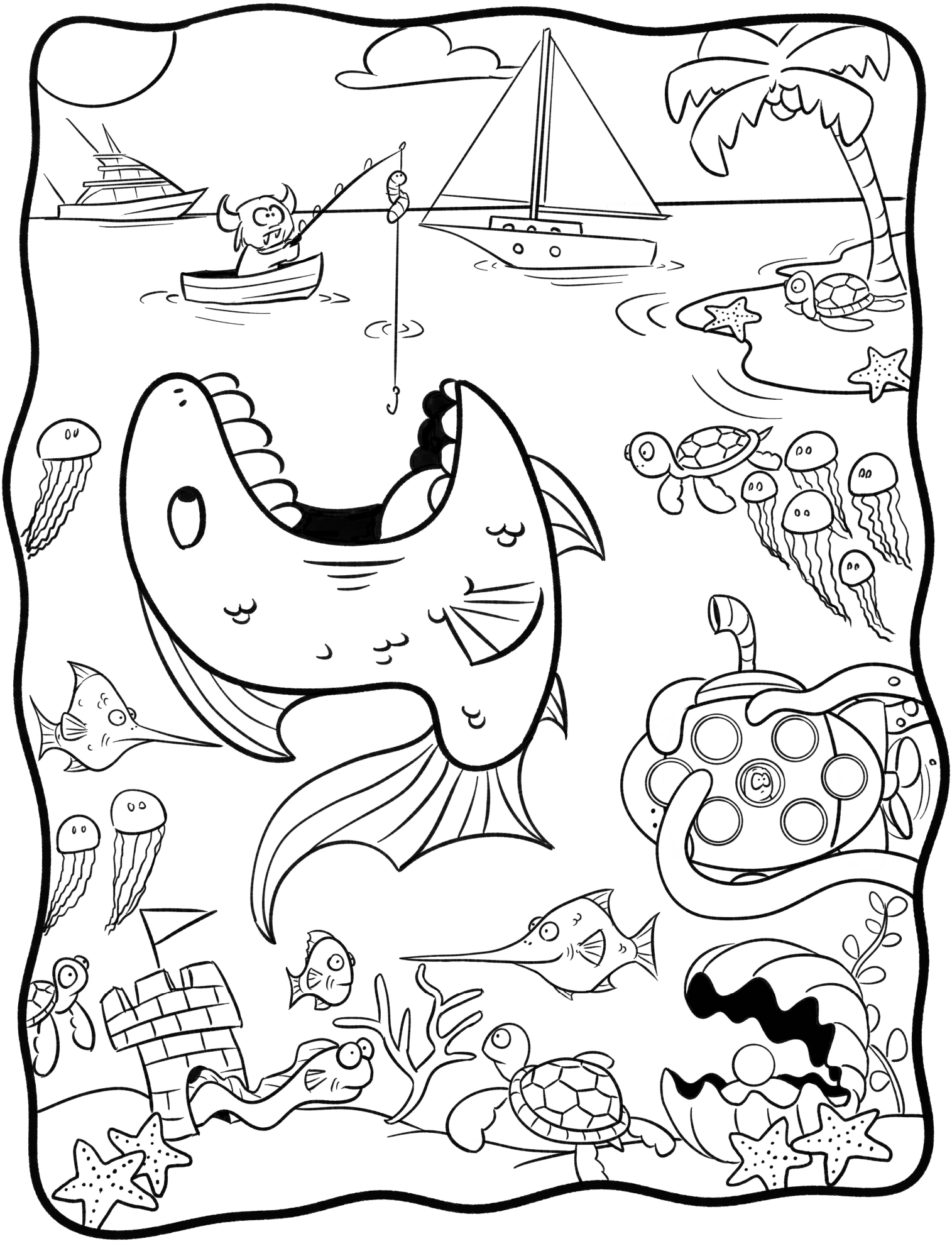
What is a hodag? The hodag started as a hoax created by the prankster Eugene Shepard in Rhinelander, Wisconsin in 1893. He may have been inspired by Native American folklore stories of the Mishipeshu, the Ojibwe water panther, which resembles Shepard's description of the hodag. Shepard later visited the tomb of King Tut in Egypt and determined the hodag was originally called Selblatkey. Sounds like he was just having fun… hodag fun!

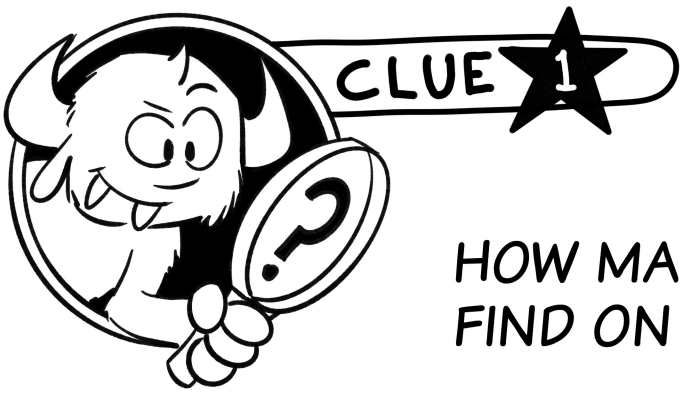
SOLVE THE SECRET MESSAGE

16 puzzle pages are marked with this badge.

Each puzzle will give you one letter to the secret message below. The badge has a number in a star to tell you which letter of the message it matches with. Solve the message and have fun!

1	2	3		4	5	6
7	8	9	10		11	12
	13	14	15	16		



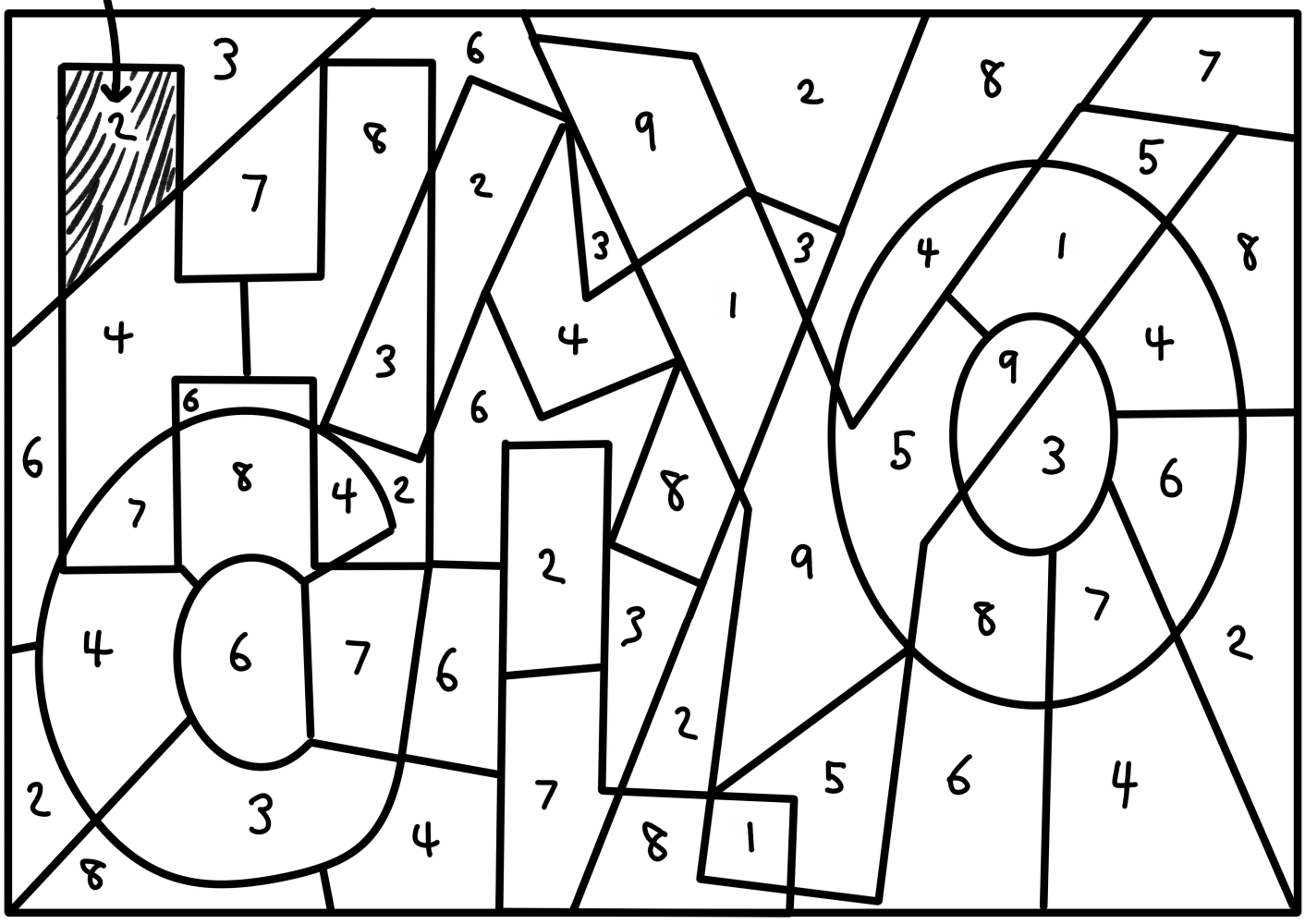


HOW MANY OF EACH CAN YOU FIND ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE?

2

SWORDFISH	JELLYFISH	TURTLES	SUBMARINE WINDOWS	STARFISH	BOATS
____	____	____	____	____	____

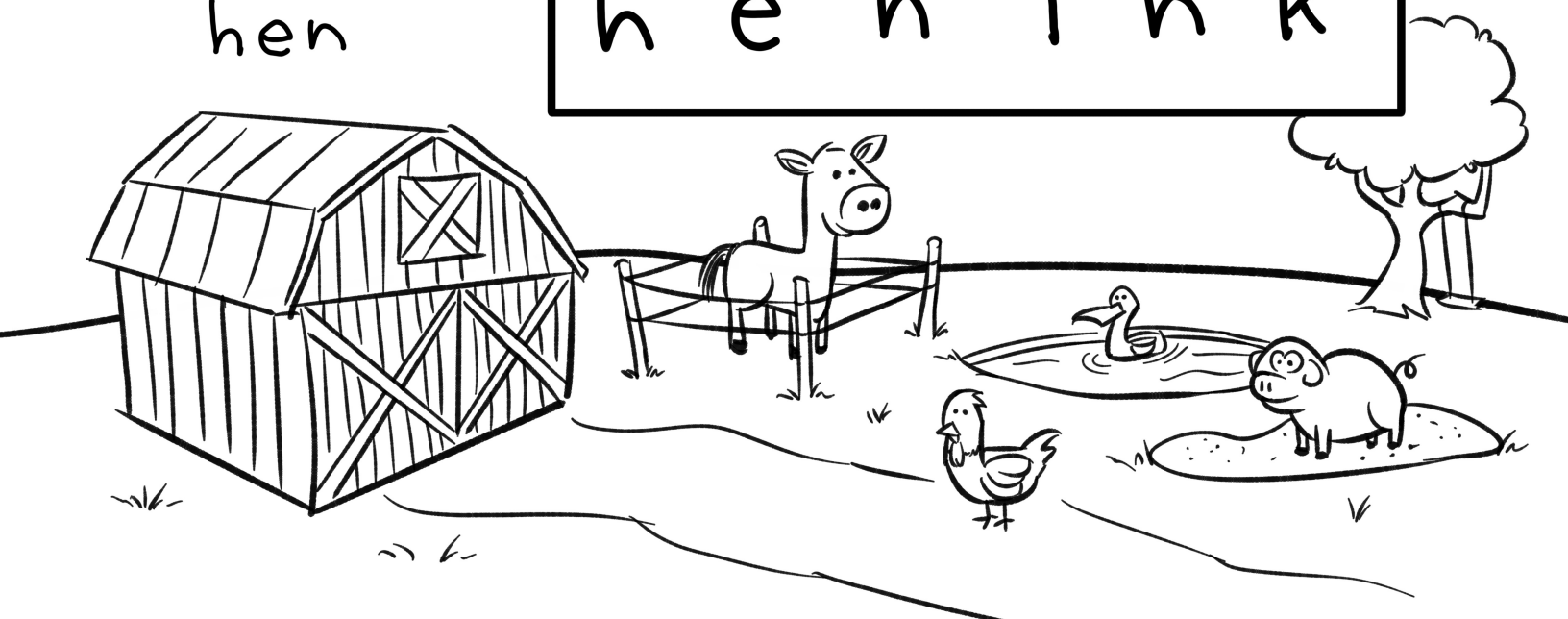
FILL IN EACH SHAPE BELOW THAT HAS A MATCHING NUMBER TO REVEAL THE HIDDEN LETTER.

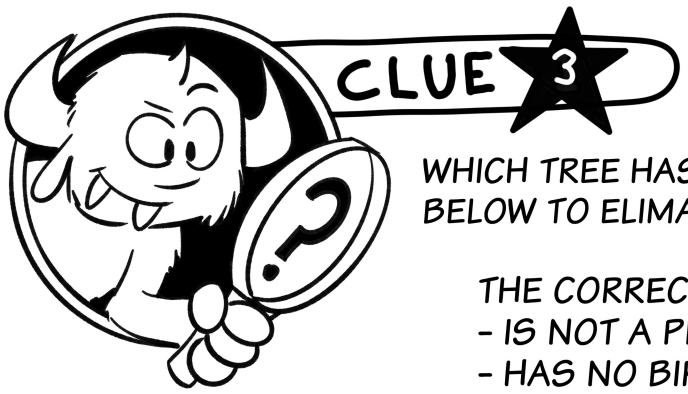


COMPLETE THE WORD SEARCH. THE HIDDEN LETTER WILL BE THE ONLY ONE THAT REMAINS.

cat
dog
duck
pig
mouse
horse
cows
goat
chicken
hen

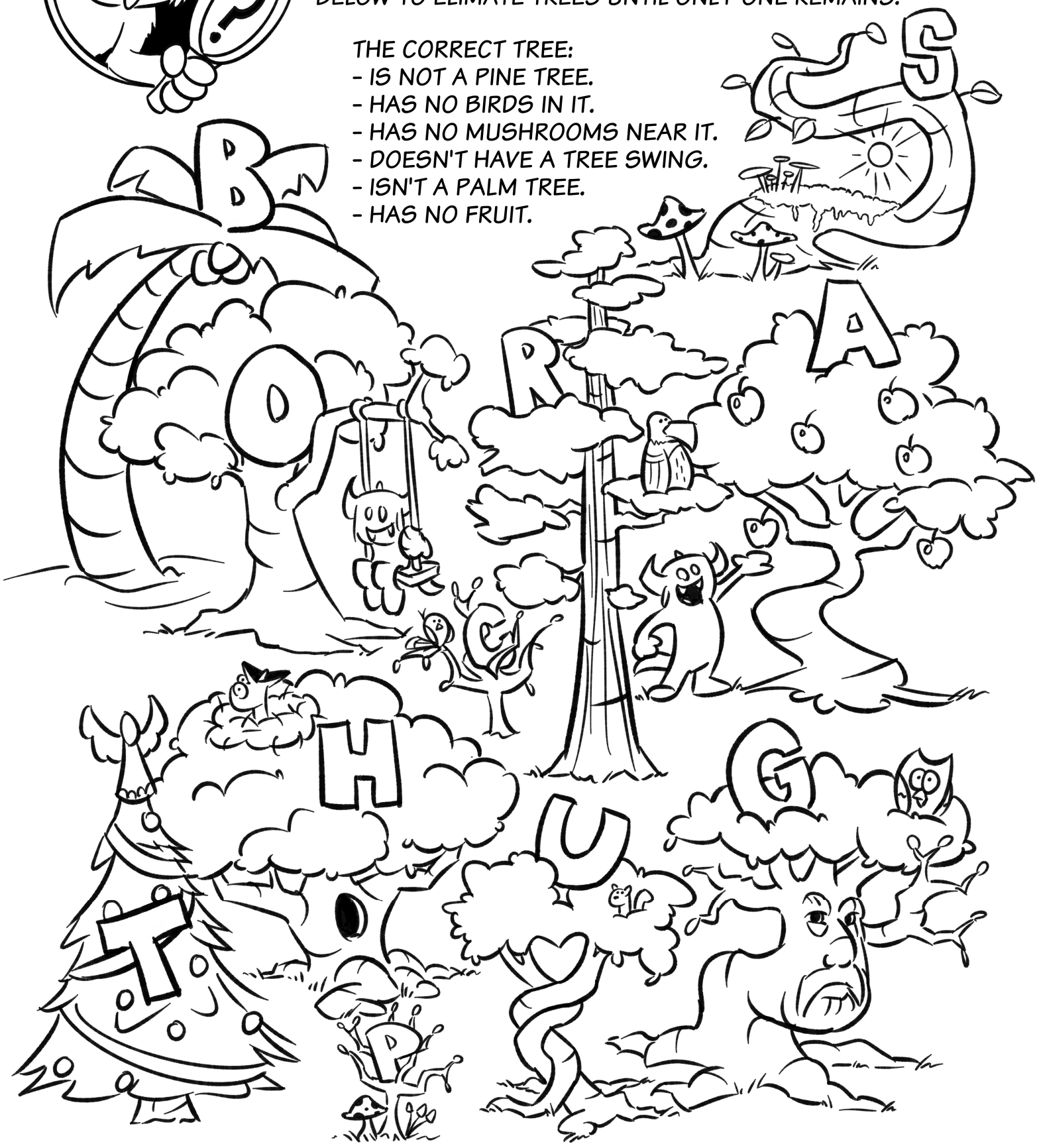
c	a	t	d	c	p
m	h	c	o	h	i
o	o	o	g	i	g
u	r	w	g	c	d
s	s	s	o	k	u
e	e	o	a	e	c
h	e	n	t	n	k





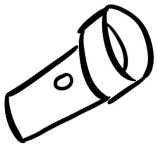
WHICH TREE HAS THE LETTER WE NEED? USE THE HINTS BELOW TO ELIMATE TREES UNTIL ONLY ONE REMAINS.

THE CORRECT TREE:
- IS NOT A PINE TREE.
- HAS NO BIRDS IN IT.
- HAS NO MUSHROOMS NEAR IT.
- DOESN'T HAVE A TREE SWING.
- ISN'T A PALM TREE.
- HAS NO FRUIT.



SEARCH & FIND

TENT



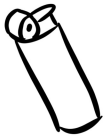
FLASHLIGHT

HAT

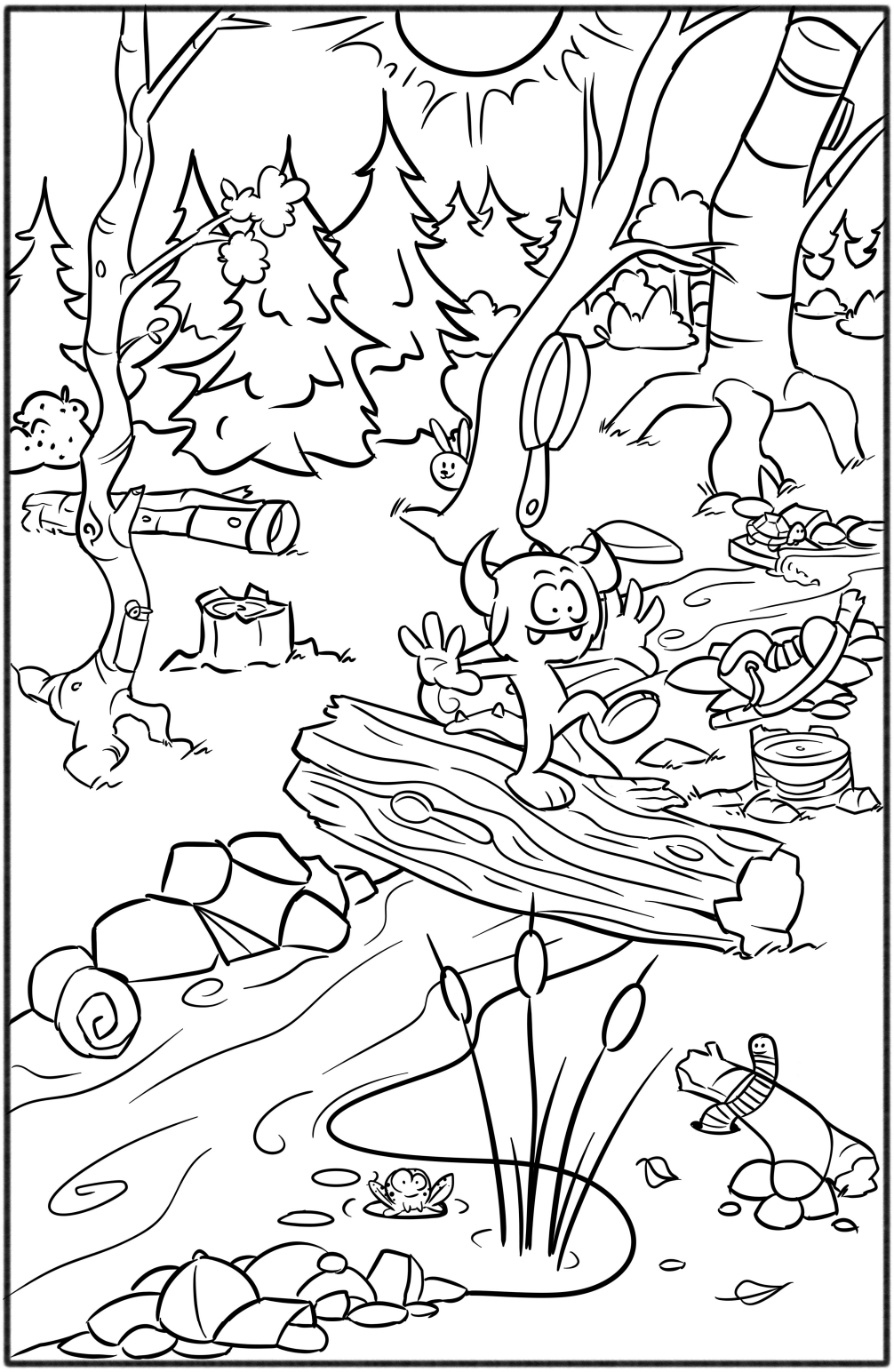
SLEEPING BAG

THERMOS

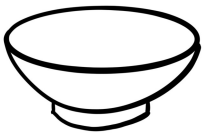
SOCK



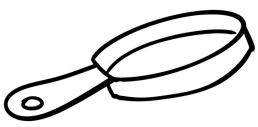
LIGHTER



SPOON



BOWL



PAN

SHOE

FIND THE HODAG BELOW THAT MATCHES EXACTLY TO THE HODAG AT THE TOP. THE MATCH HAS THE LETTER YOU NEED.

B

T

C

V

A

L

FIND THE LONGEST EXIT ON THE WATERSLIDE TO GET THE LETTER YOU NEED.

start here

D

O

P

R

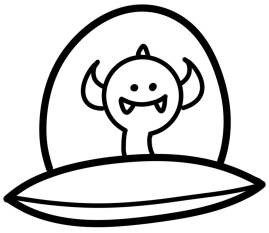
E

L

T

S

N



Fill in the blanks below and then use them in the story to make something silly.

Name:_____	Made up word:_____
Thing:_____	City:_____
Color:_____	Color:_____
Adjective:_____	Adjective:_____
Vegetable:_____	Fruit:_____
Animal:_____	Animal:_____
Number:_____	Person you know:_____
	Thing:_____

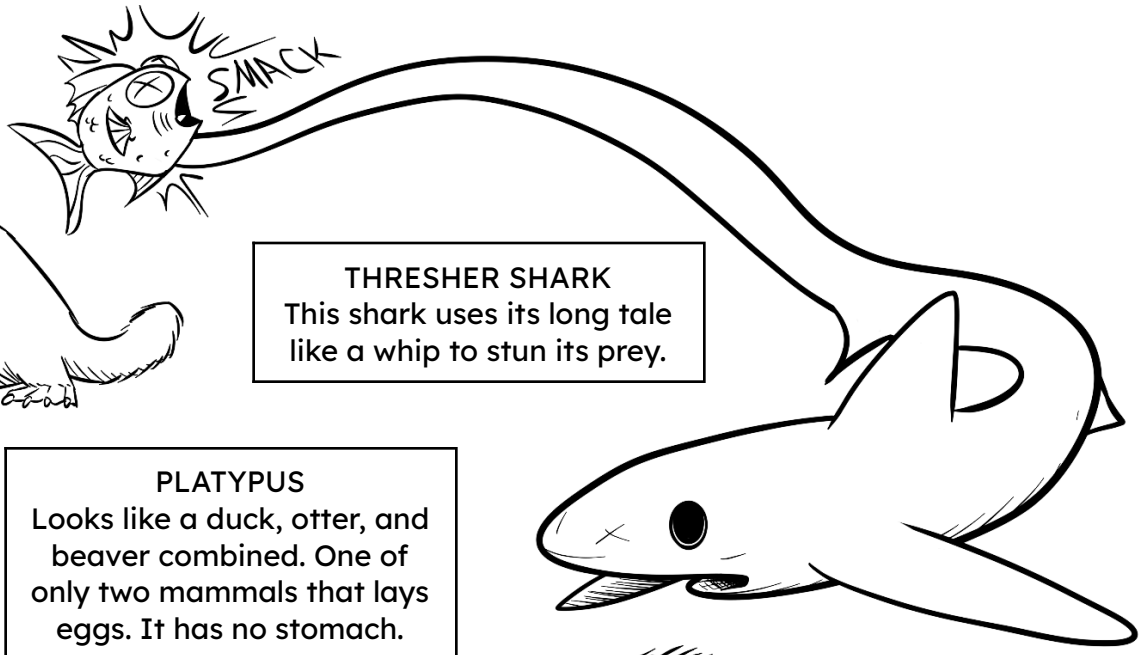
Special Delivery

One clear, starry night _[name]_ the hodag gazed into the sky. There was something odd. The hodag was certain that there was a new star and it was growing brighter. Just then the star expanded and in an instant a ship that looked like a giant _[thing]_ landed right near the hodag.

A _[color]_ _[adjective]_ alien that looked like a cross between a [vegetable]_ and a _[animal]_ quickly ran out and said, “Special delivery for earth. I’ve got _[number]_ tons of _[made up word]_. Where do you want them?” Confused, the hodag replied, “_[city]_”. Without saying a word the alien ran back to his ship and left.

The next day every TV showed a _[color]_ _[adjective]_ alien that looked like a cross between a _[fruit]_ and a _[animal]_ saying, “Please accept our gift piled in your city as a token of peace. We were told by _[person you know]_ that humans love what you call _[thing]_’s”

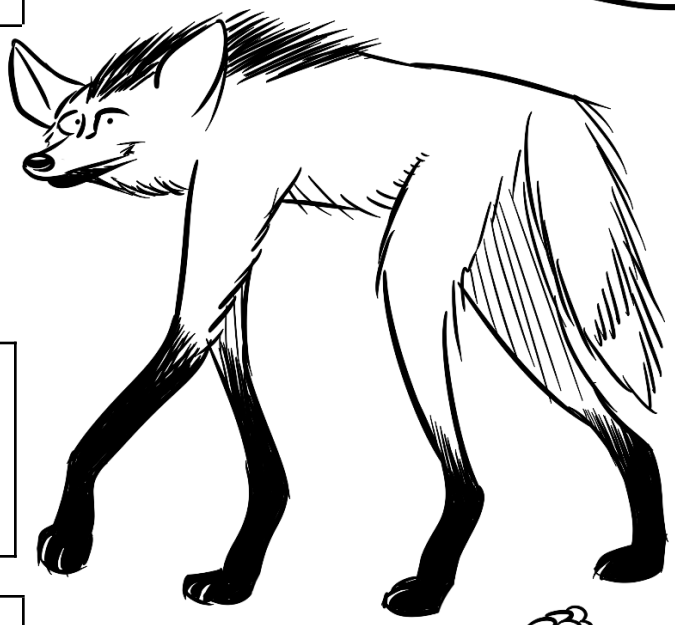
CHECK OUT THESE AWESOME ANIMALS!



THRESHER SHARK
This shark uses its long tale like a whip to stun its prey.

PLATYPUS
Looks like a duck, otter, and beaver combined. One of only two mammals that lays eggs. It has no stomach.

KOOKABURRA
Largest bird of the kingfisher family but known for their distinctive call.

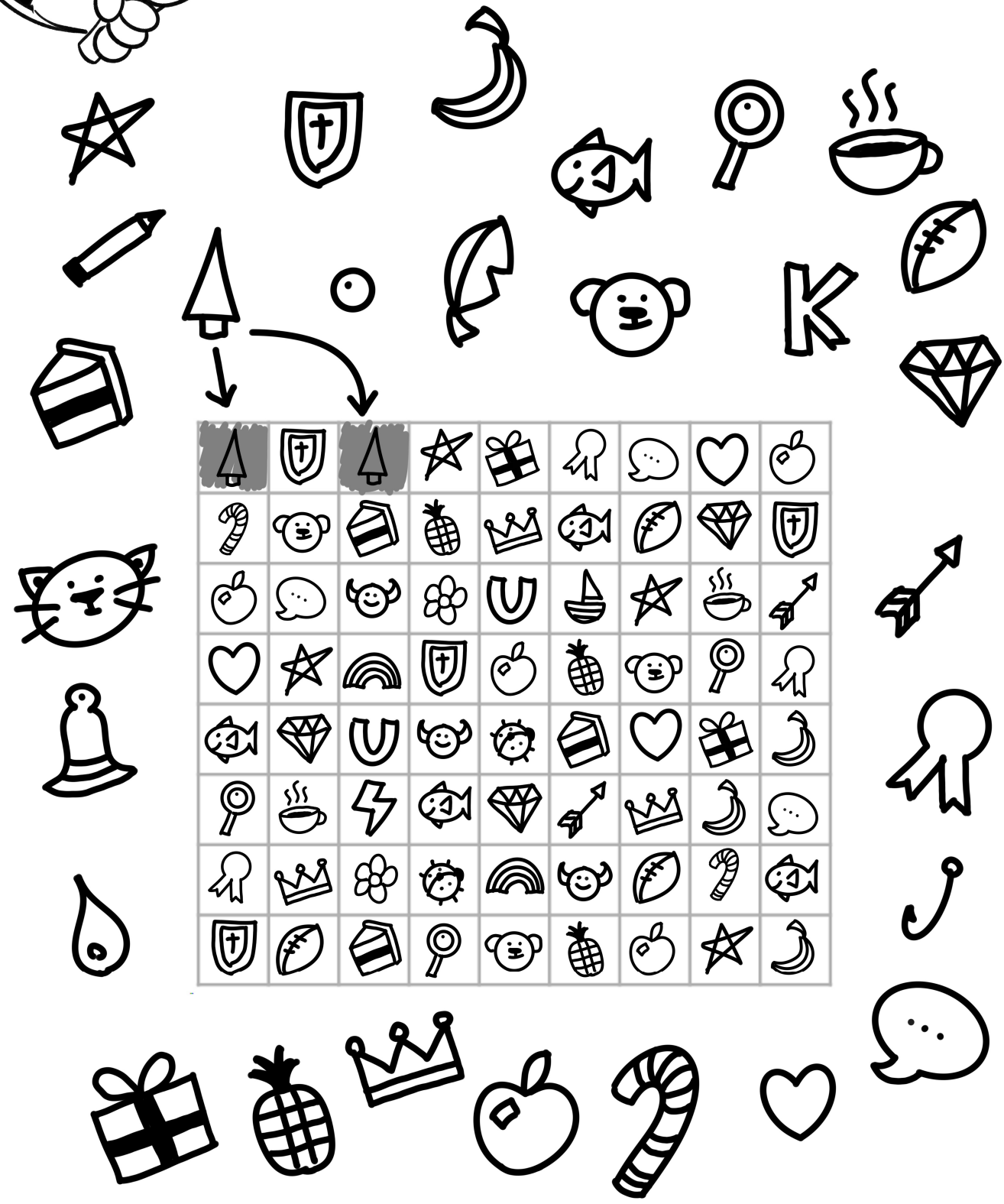


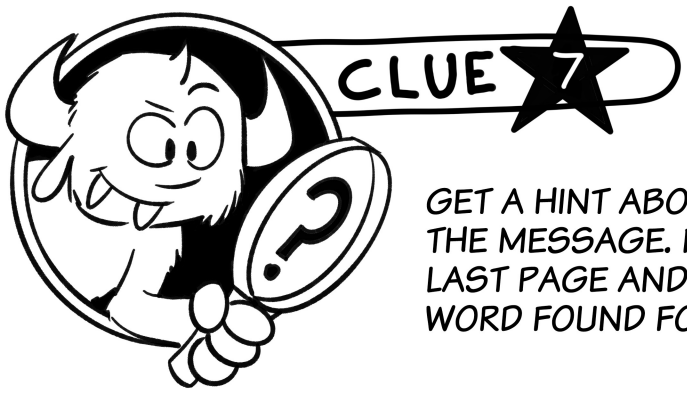
MANED WOLF
The tallest wild canid looks like a stretched out red fox. Its diet is 50% plant based.

MARKHOR
Screw-horned goat of Central Asia.

PANGOLIN
The only mammal covered in scales.

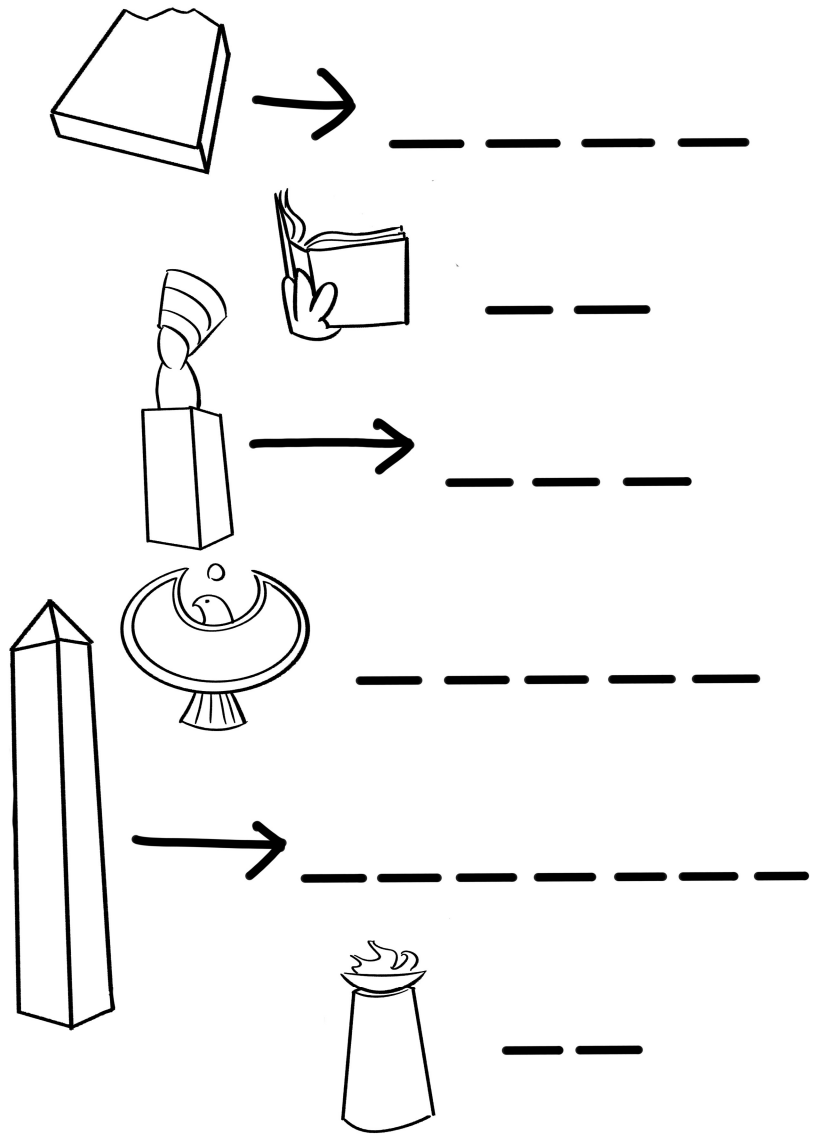
FILL IN THE GRID SQUARES THAT HAVE A MATCHING IMAGE FOUND ON THE PAGE. THE HIDDEN LETTER WILL BE REVEALED.





GET A HINT ABOUT THE SECRET LETTER BY DECODING THE MESSAGE. FIND THE MATCHING ITEMS ON THE LAST PAGE AND USE THE KEY BOXES TO DECODE THE WORD FOUND FOR EACH ONE.

KEY	
A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	
G	
H	
I	
J	
K	
L	
M	



KEY	
	N
	O
	P
	Q
	R
	S
	T
	U
	V
	W
	X
	Y
	Z

LETS PLAY TAG. START WITH THE HODAG. THEN FIND THE NAME OF THE NEXT ANIMAL TO TAG BY USING THE LAST LETTER OF THEIR NAME. "HODAG" ENDS IN "G" SO "GUS" IS THE NEXT ONE TAGGED. CONTINUE BY FINDING THE NAME THAT STARTS WITH AN "S". ONE ANIMAL WON'T BE TAGGED. THE LETTER YOU NEED IS THE FIRST LETTER OF THEIR NAME.

ELOF

HODAG

GUS

NICK

MO

KATE

RON

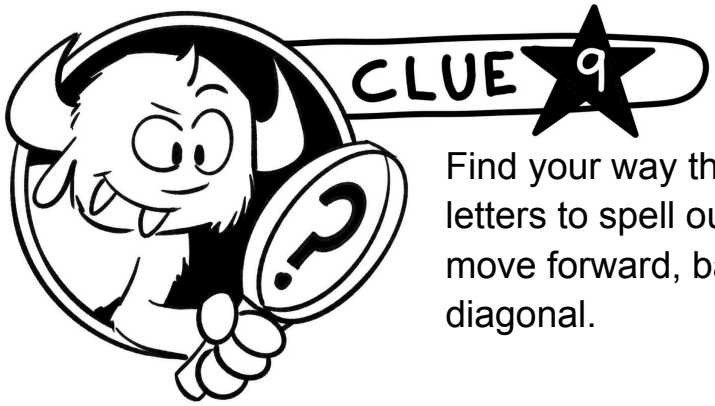
FRED

OSCAR

DASH

ASH

SAM



Find your way through the maze by connecting letters to spell out the following animals. You may move forward, backward, up or down but not diagonal.

HODAG	OTTER	GOAT	MOOSE	WOMBAT
PANDA	FROG	SKUNK	RACCOON	

start

H	U	S	E	D	A	F	R	O	T
O	D	H	E	N	C	L	U	G	E
S	A	G	E	A	P	T	V	S	K
E	N	O	P	A	G	A	E	A	U
N	T	T	D	O	M	B	F	I	N
N	E	D	T	W	H	E	A	R	K
L	R	G	E	E	S	T	C	T	E
R	F	O	O	R	O	A	C	O	O
S	N	A	T	M	O	A	K	E	N

finish

Write the remaining unconnected letters in order from left to right in the blank spaces below to get a hint on discovering the hidden letter.

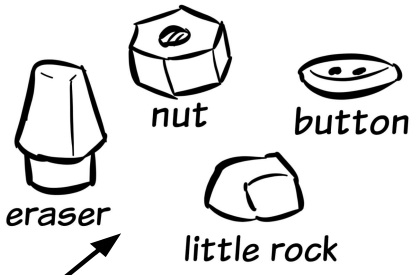
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

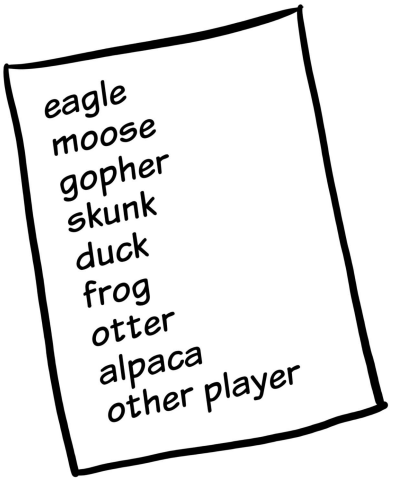
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

DAGTAG
BOARD GAME



GAME SETUP

1. Get a six sided die.
2. Each player needs a game piece like an eraser, nut, button, little rock, or anything.
3. Each player gets a piece of paper and lists each of the animals to tag.

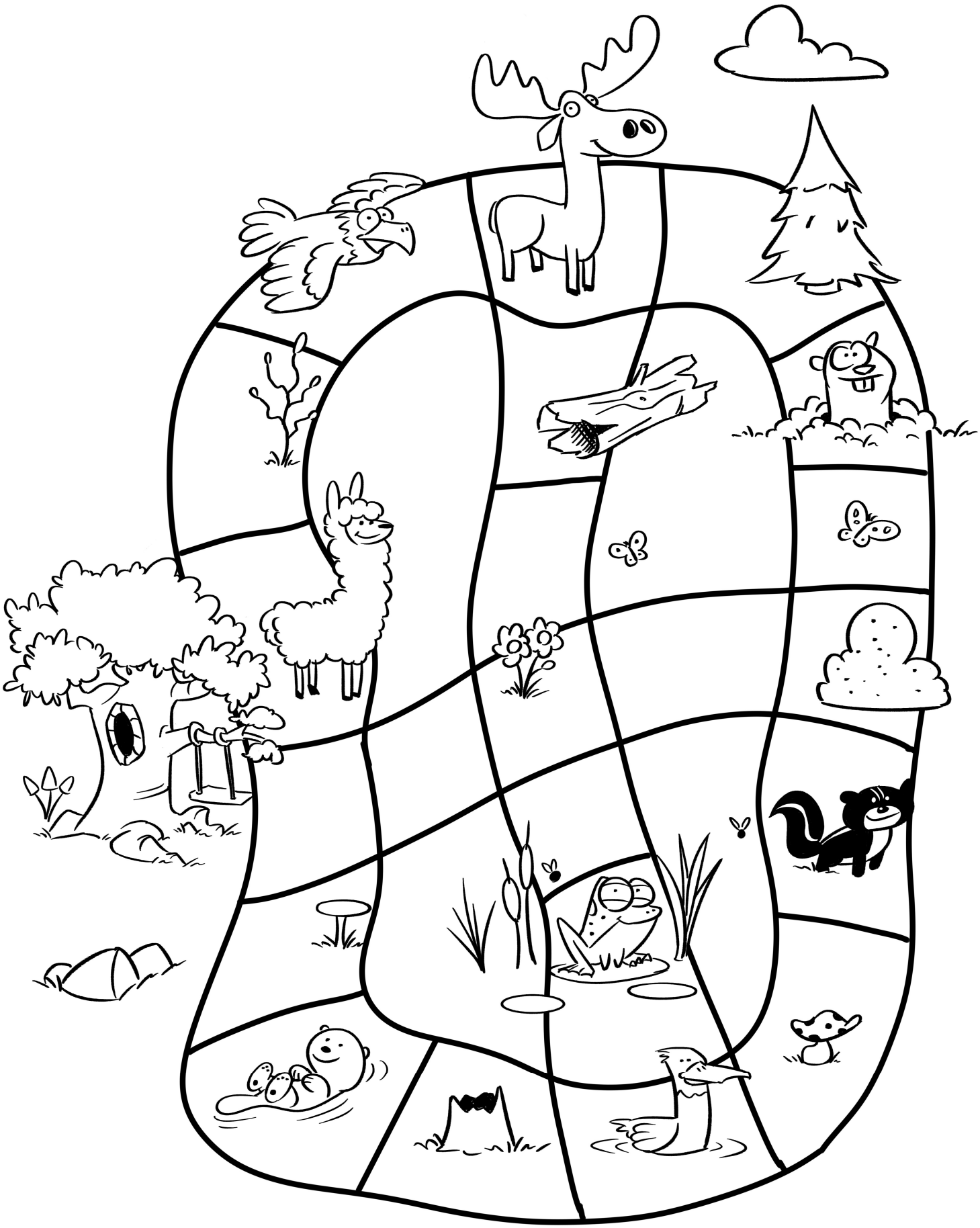


HOW TO PLAY

1. Each player places their game piece on the board on any space without an animal.
2. Players take turns rolling the die trying to land on all spaces that have an animal and one space that another player is on.
3. The first player to cross off every animal is the winner.

RULES/QUESTIONS

- When landing on a space with another player on it, only the player that shook the dice gets to cross off “other player” on their list.
- On each turn a player can move in any direction around the board.



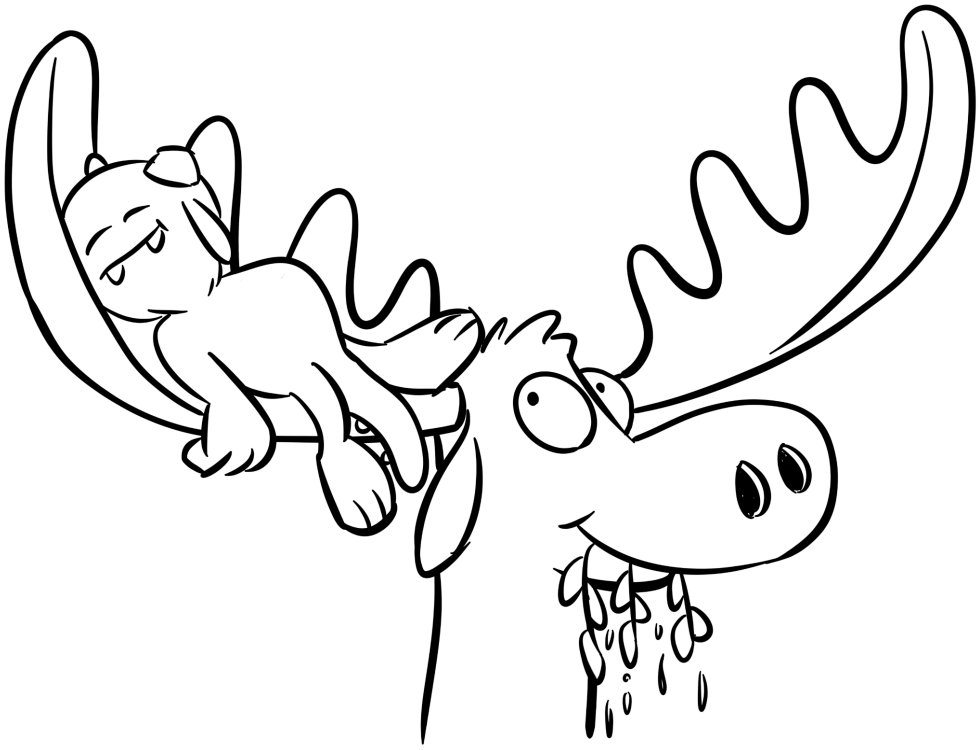
Hugo’s Horns

One crisp Northwoods morning, Hugo the Hodag scrambled out of his burrow and caught his reflection in a pond. His horns had finally started to bloom! They were just tiny, knobby nubs, but Hugo was thrilled.

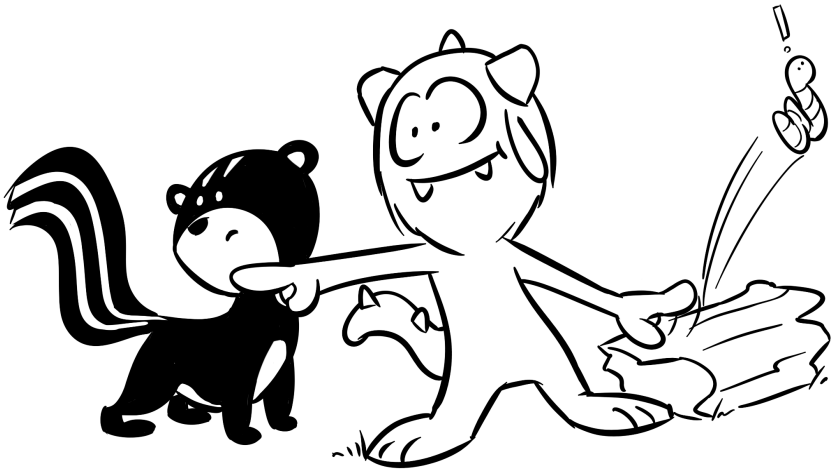
"Mama!" he shouted, scampering over to his mother, Hope. "How can I make them grow faster? I want big, sharp horns by sunset!" Hope smiled,"Why not spend the day asking our forest friends for their secrets? You might find an answer in the woods."

Hugo dashed off and soon found Elof the Eagle perched atop a jagged pine. "I don't know much about horns, little one," Elof confessed, ruffling his feathers. "But Mo the Moose has a rack so wide he can barely fit between the trees! Hop on my back, and we'll go find him." They soared over the canopy and landed by a shimmering lake where Mo the Moose was wading through the reeds.

"The secret?" Mo bellowed, water dripping from his chin. "Twigs, leaves, and greens! I eat until I can't eat another bite." Hugo followed suit, gobbling down so many willow branches and lily pads that he became too full to move. Mo kindly let the sleepy Hodag nap right in the cradle of his massive antlers for the rest of the afternoon.



The next morning, Hugo felt lighter and headed toward the hollow logs. He bumped into Sam the Skunk. "Horns? No clue," Sam chirped. "But I stay strong by digging up crunchy beetles and juicy grubs. Want one?" Hugo made a face—bugs definitely weren't his style—but he spent the morning helping Sam dig, even managing to nudge Willy the Worm out of harm's way before Sam could spot him.



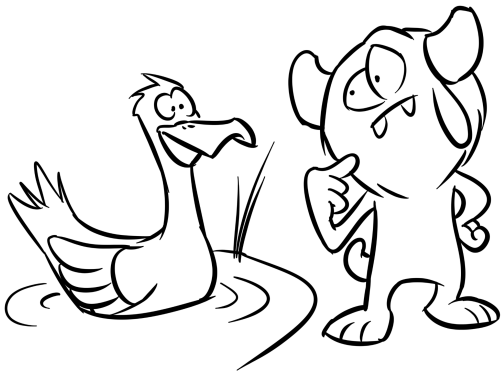
By midday, Hugo reached the riverbank and found Oscar the Otter sliding into the current. "Never thought about horns," Oscar laughed. "You should try playing instead! We're starting a game of tag." Hugo couldn't resist. He spent hours splashing through the water and chasing the otters until the sun dipped low.

Over the next few days, Hugo collected advice from everyone:

Gus the Gopher suggested that digging deep tunnels was the best exercise for growth.

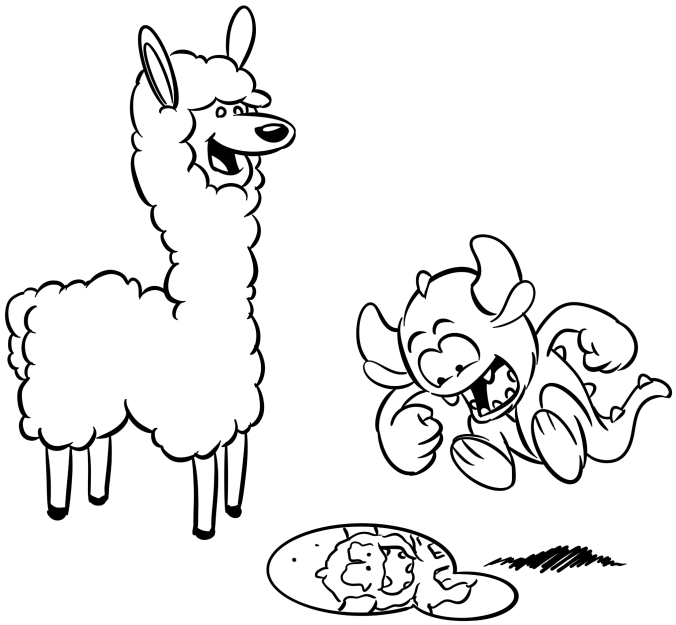
Fred the Frog recommended a high-protein diet like flies.

Ron the Raccoon was certain that Dan the Deer's grass-only diet was the key to antlers.

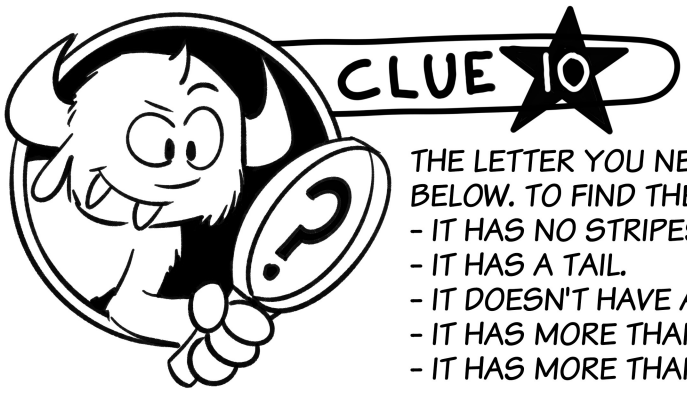


Dash the Duck offered some confusing wisdom: "A hodag with horns is like a duck to water."

Finally, near a field of clover, Hugo met Ash the Alpaca. "Faster growing horns?" Ash hummed, tilting her head. "Take a look in the puddle, Hugo. It seems to me they're doing just fine." Hugo peered into the water. To his amazement, his horns weren't nubs anymore—they were sturdy, curved, and beginning to show their true Hodag shape! He had been so busy playing, digging, and exploring that he hadn't even noticed them growing.

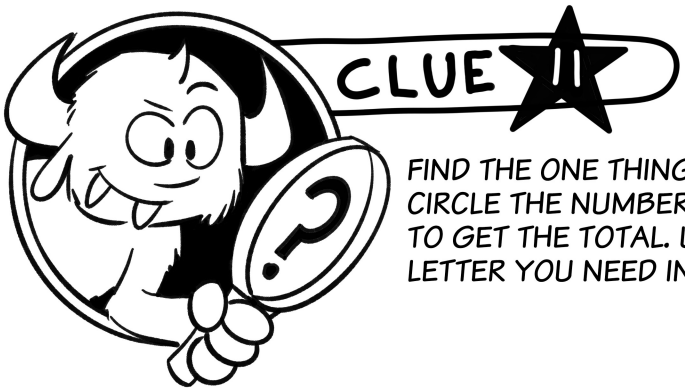


He raced all the way back to the burrow. "Mama, look! My horns grew! Why didn't you just tell me I had to wait?" Hope hugged him tight. "Because, Hugo, waiting is much more fun when you spend it with friends."

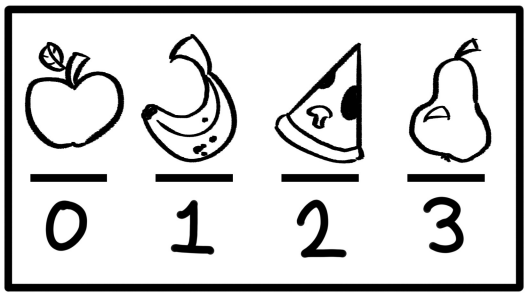


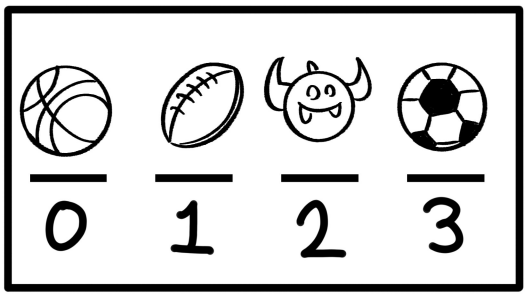
THE LETTER YOU NEED IS ASSIGNED TO ONE OF THE CREATURES BELOW. TO FIND THE CORRECT ONE USE THE BELOW HINTS:

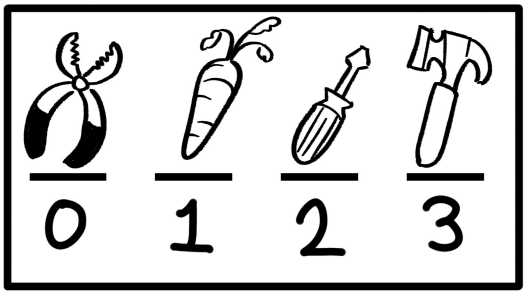
- IT HAS NO STRIPES.
- IT HAS A TAIL.
- IT DOESN'T HAVE ANTENNA.
- IT HAS MORE THAN 2 EYES.
- IT HAS MORE THAN 2 LEGS.

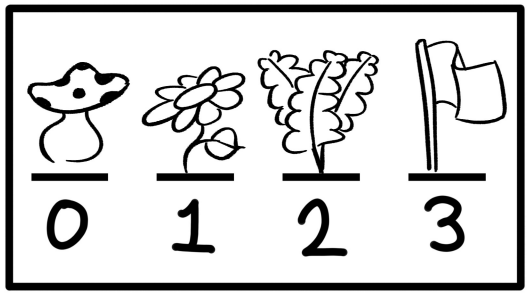


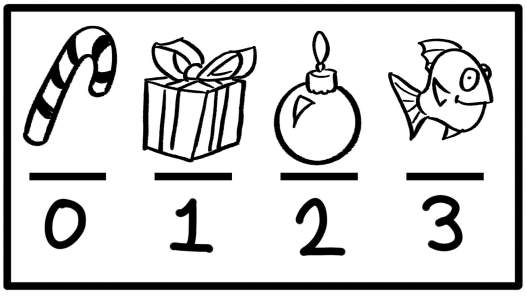
FIND THE ONE THING THAT DOESN'T BELONG IN EACH BOX AND CIRCLE THE NUMBER BELOW IT. ADD THE CIRCLED NUMBERS TO GET THE TOTAL. USE THE TOTAL TO FIND THE LETTER YOU NEED IN THE ALPHABET (A=1, B=2, C=3, ...)

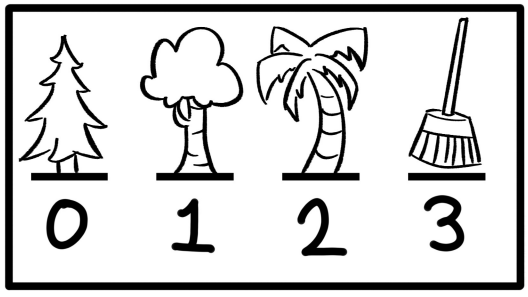


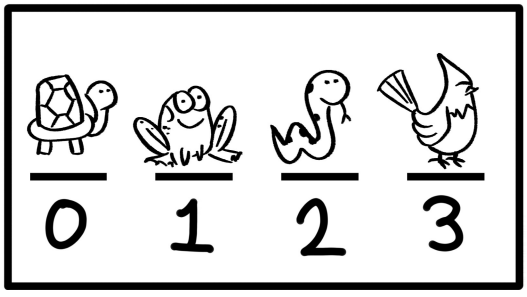


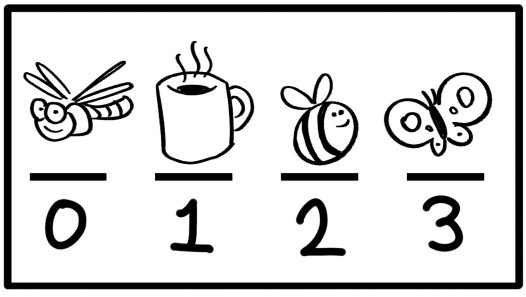


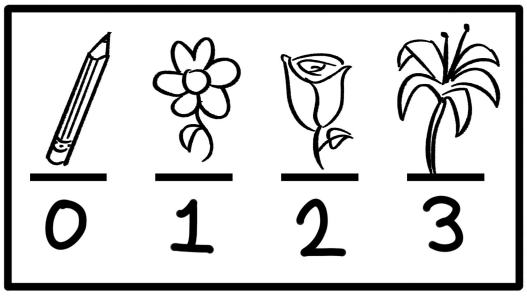


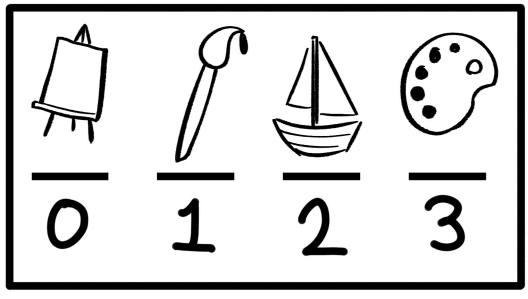




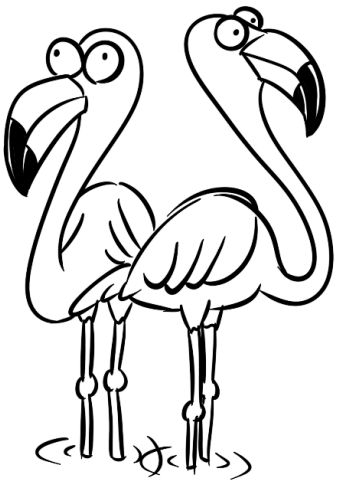






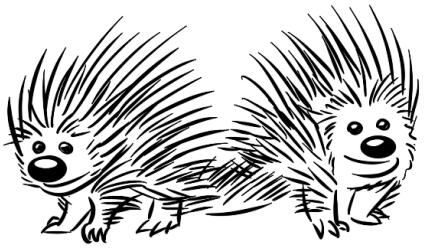


A group of cows makes a herd. Check out the group names that some other animals make.



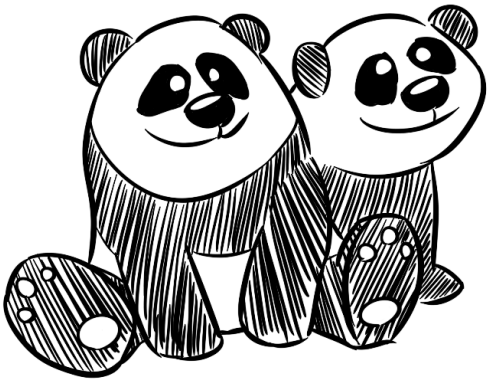
Flamingos make
A FLAMBOYANCE

Porcupines make
A PRICKLE

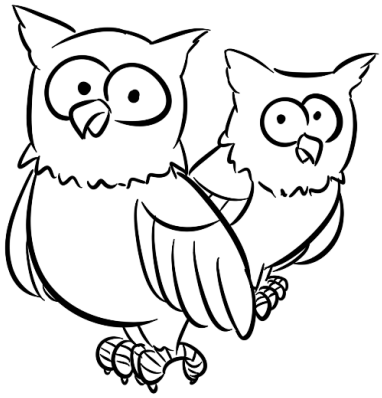


Zebras make
A DAZZLE

Chipmunks make
A MISCHIEF



Pandas make
AN EMBARRASSMENT



Lemurs make
A CONSPIRACY

Owls make
A PARLIAMENT

What would a group of hodags be called? Could it be a daggle, a hobjoggle, a hodgepodge, or a hornswoggle? Who knows?! Make your own name.

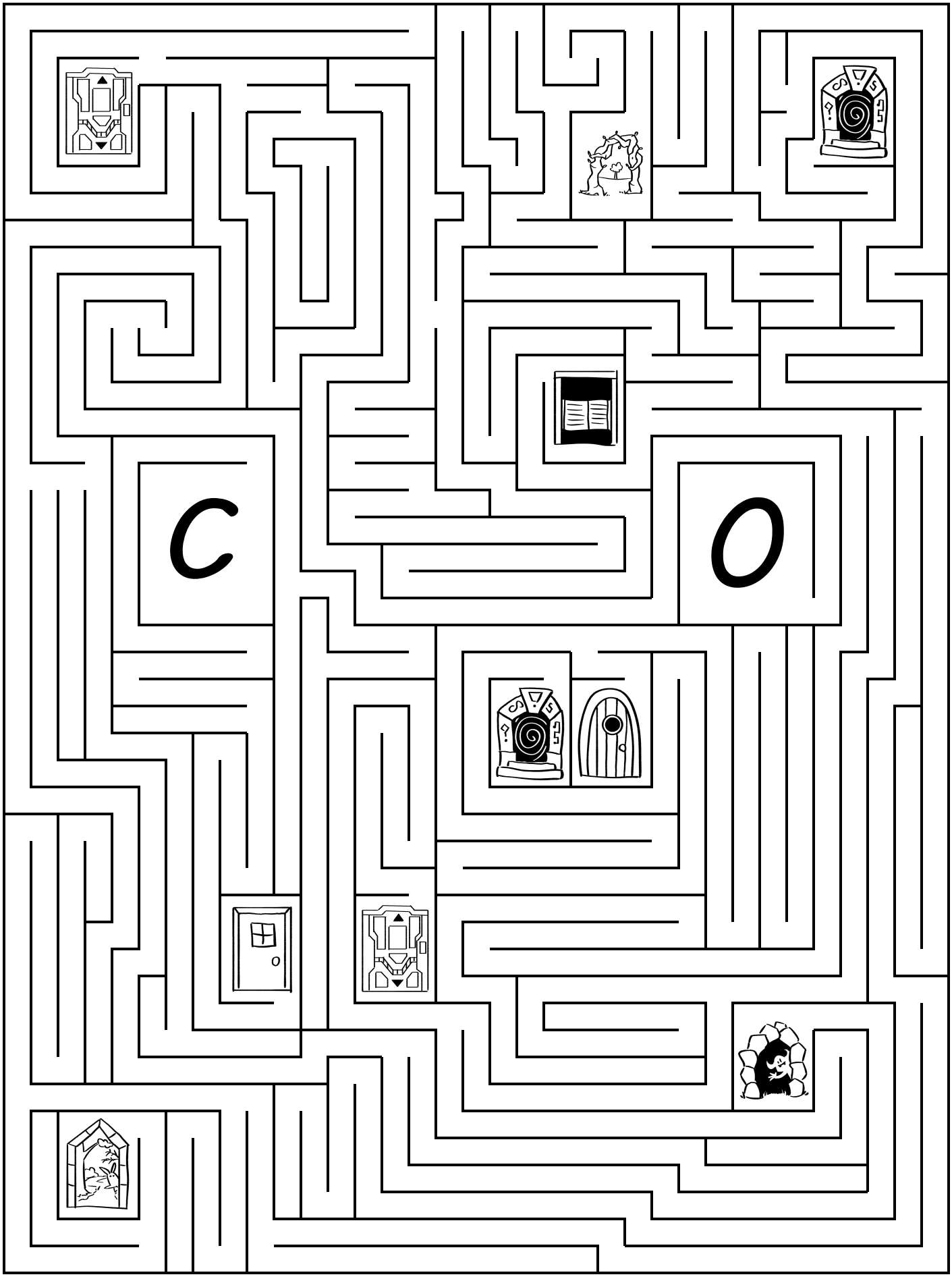
CLUE 12

SOLVE THE MAZE TO FIND THE LETTER YOU NEED. WHEN YOU COME TO A DOOR FIND THE MATCHING DOOR TO CONTINUE.

START

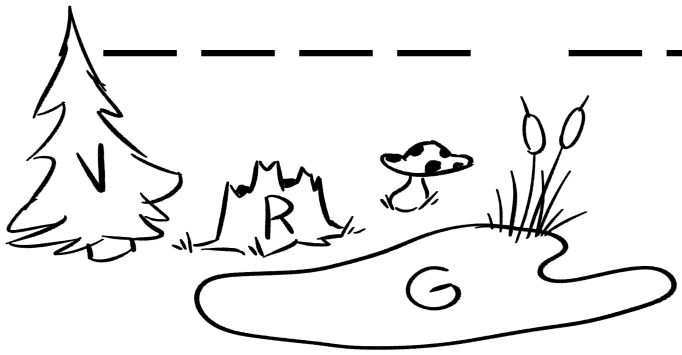
A

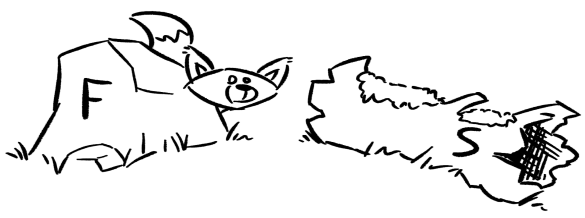
S


C
O

THE STORY BELOW HAS A HINT FOR THE LETTER YOU NEED. GET THE HINT BY PUTTING THE FIRST LETTER FROM EACH SENTENCE IN ORDER BELOW THE STORY.

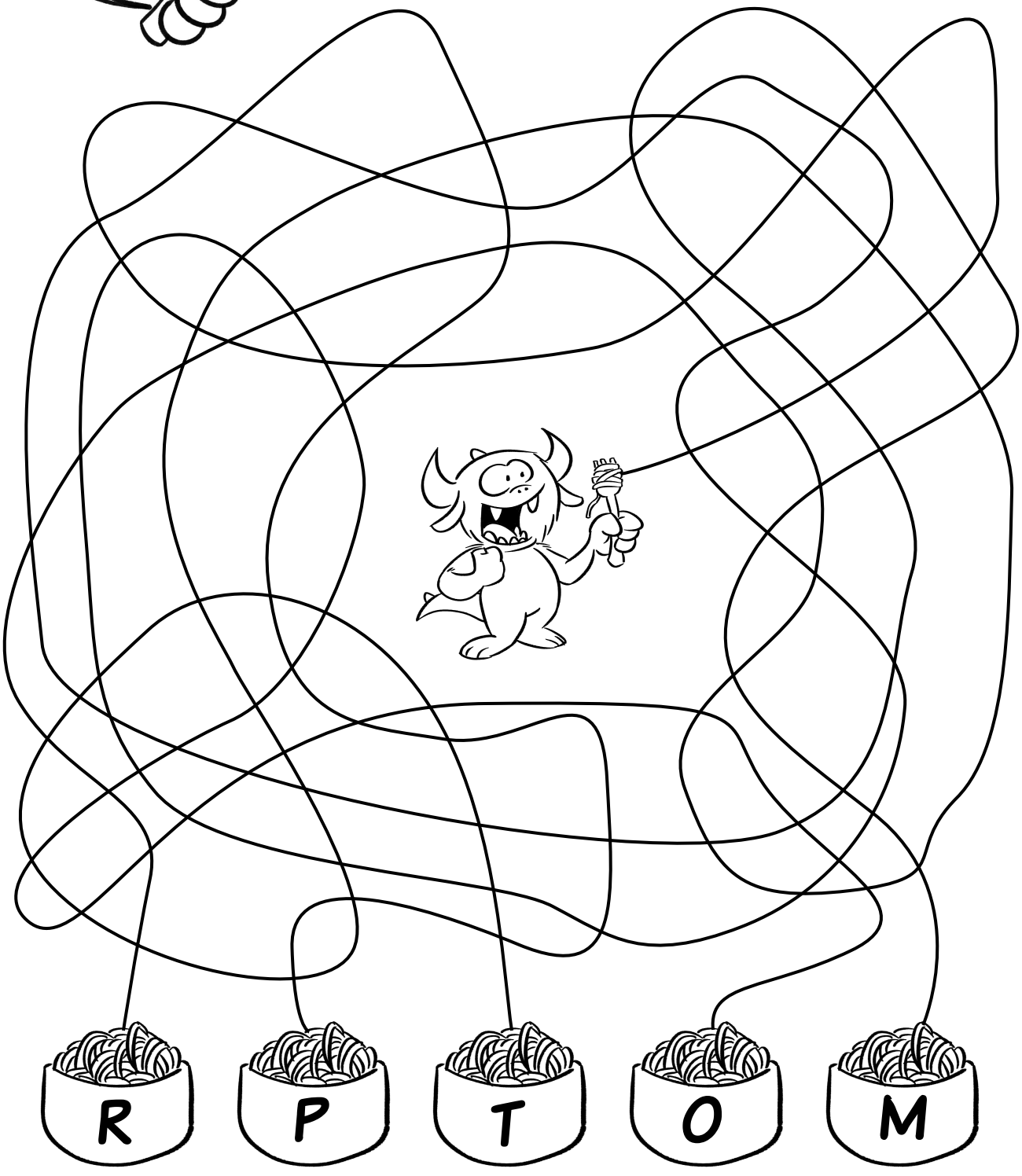
The woods grew silent as the sun dipped below the horizon.
Rustling leaves whispered secrets to the darkening sky.
Every shadow stretched long across the mossy floor.
Empty branches waited for a heavy, feathered landing.
Wingbeats cut through the cool evening air like a soft sigh.
In the distance, a low melody echoed through the pines.
This ancient oak offered a sturdy place to rest.
Hoots vibrated deep within the hollow trunk.
Overhead, two golden eyes blinked open in the moonlight.
Wise and watchful, the hunter scanned the silver clearing.
Life moved below, but here, the lookout remained still.

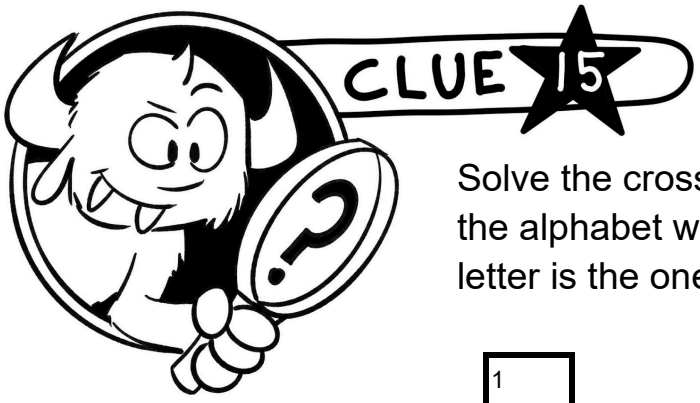




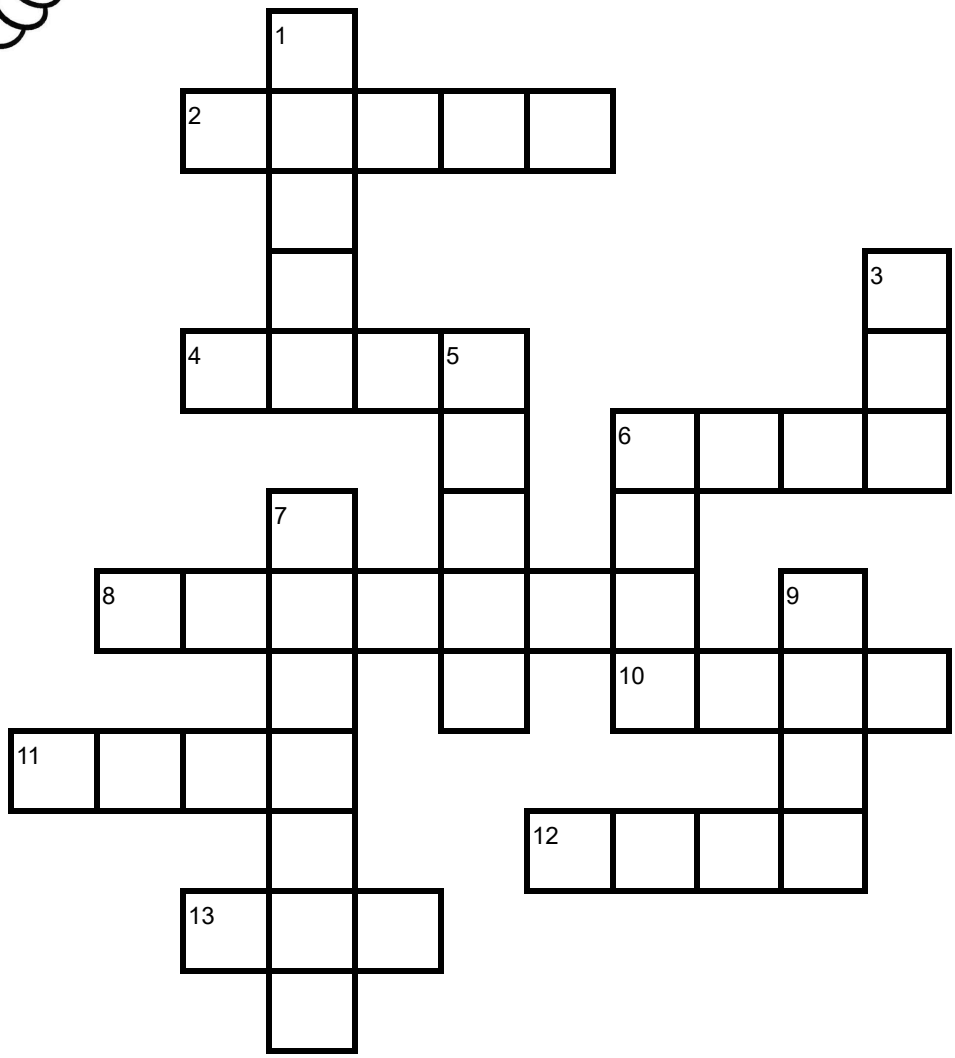
CLUE 14

FIND WHICH NOODLE BOWL THE HODAG IS EATING FROM TO GET THE LETTER YOU NEED.





Solve the crossword puzzle below. Every letter in the alphabet will be used except one. The missing letter is the one you need.

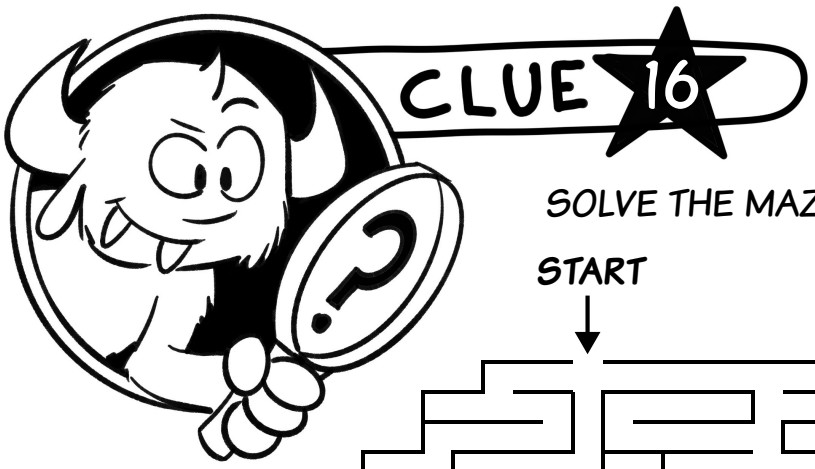


ACROSS

2. Peanut butter and _____.
4. To cut into pieces. Karate ____.
6. Opposite of bad
8. 25 cents
10. Big African cat. King of the jungle.
11. Spring, summer, ____, winter
12. To smooch someone with your lips
13. Animal park. Rhymes with blue.

DOWN

1. Long seat common at parks
3. Wet dirt. Rhymes with flood.
5. A celebration. A birthday _____!
6. Opposite of boy
7. Where the mail goes
9. Farm animals that moo (plural)

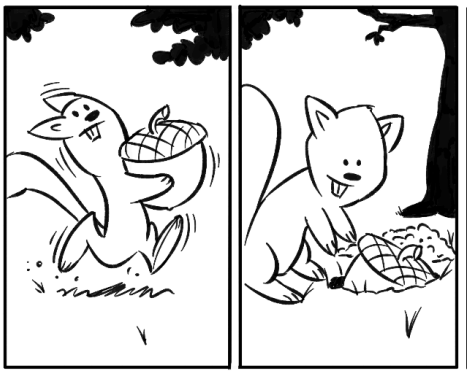


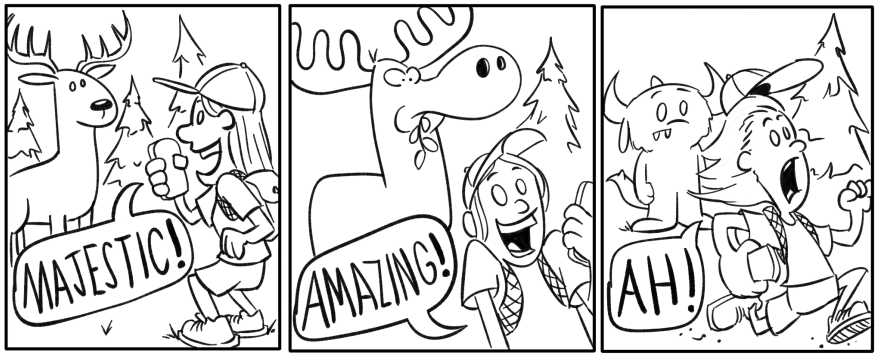
SOLVE THE MAZE TO REVEAL THE LETTER.

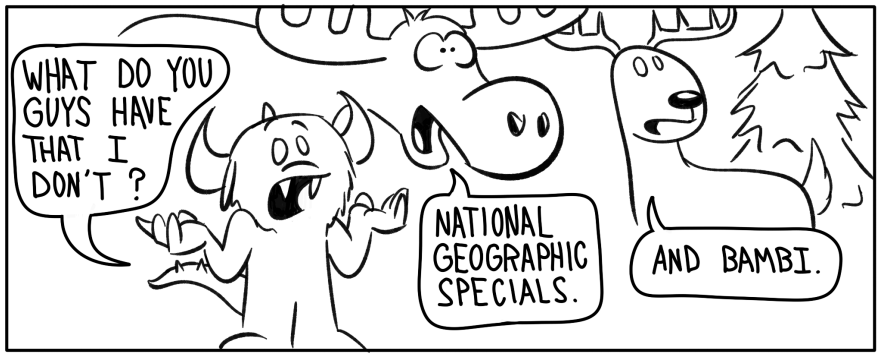
START

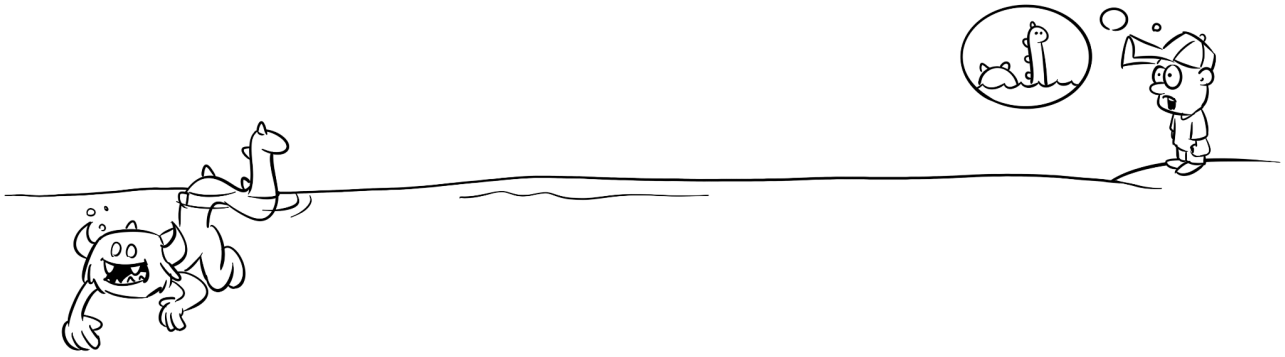
END

Dagmates a hodag and friends comicstrip









HOURS OF HODAG FUN!

FINISH A COLLECTION OF ORIGINAL PUZZLES TO SOLVE A SECRET MESSAGE FROM THE HODAG. READ THE STORY OF "HUGOS HORNS", PLAY THE "DAGTAG" BOARD GAME WITH FRIENDS, AND COLOR THE PAGES.

MOST IMPORTANTLY HAVE FUN!

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